

# **PART II**

## **FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**MONUMENT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**Blaine, Butte, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Power Counties  
State of Idaho**

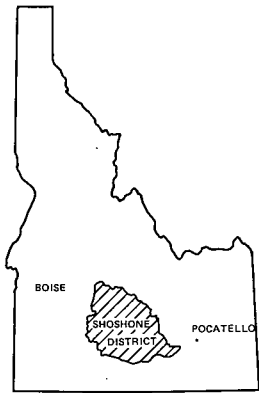
**Prepared by  
Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Shoshone District**

This final environmental impact statement describes and analyzes four alternative plans (and one sub-alternative) for managing 1,178,989 acres of public land in the Monument and Bennett Hills resource areas in the Shoshone District. Alternative A would continue present management. Alternative B would favor higher livestock stocking levels, more range improvements, agricultural development, and transfer of isolated or difficult to manage parcels out of Federal ownership. Alternative C, the proposed Monument Resource Management Plan, would pursue a balanced approach to multiple use, allowing production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values, and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. Alternative D would favor habitat management to increase wildlife populations, protection of cultural resources, protection of wilderness qualities, and opportunities for general dispersed recreation. Sub-Alternative D would be the same as Alternative D except that there would be no livestock grazing.

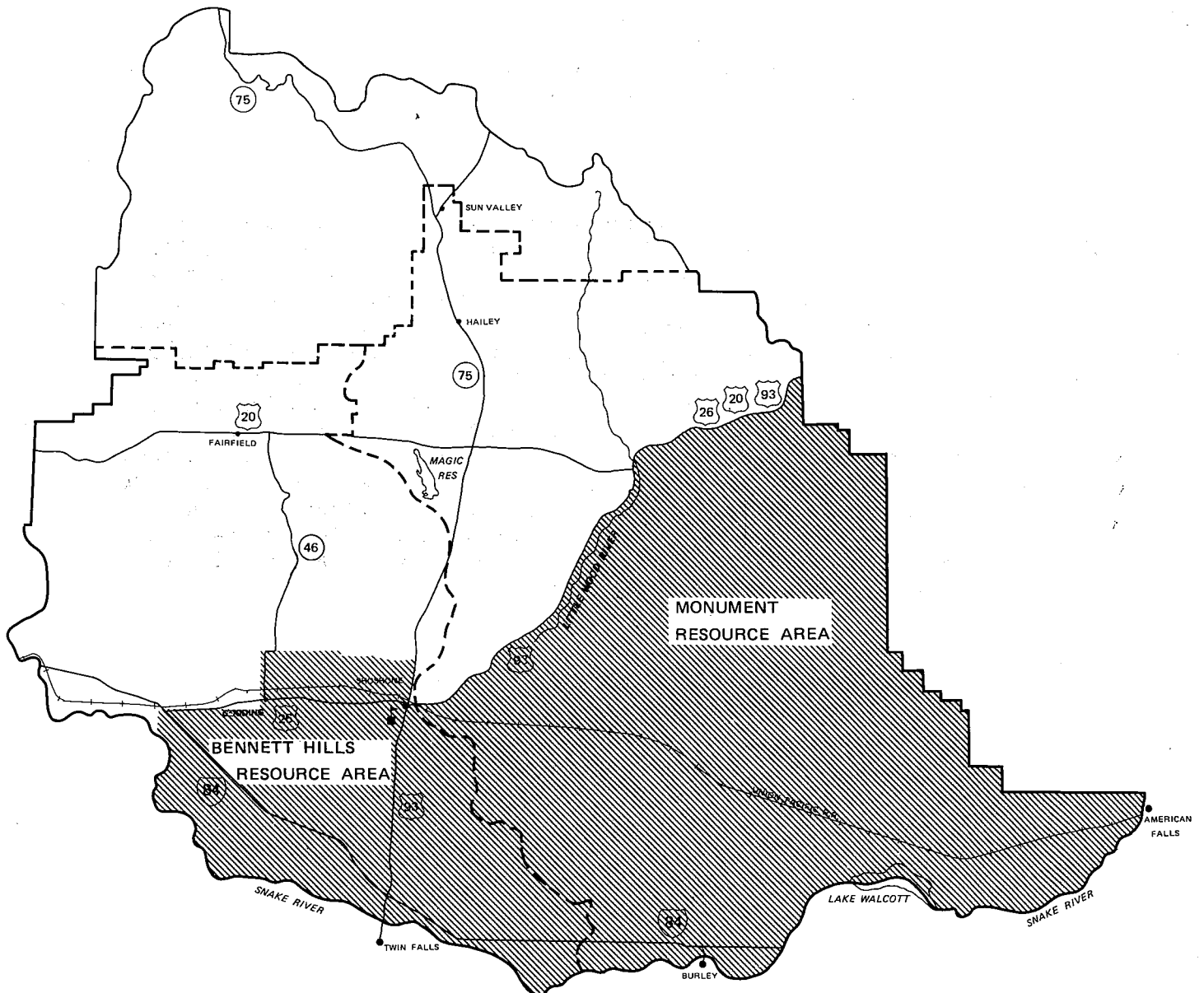
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# MONUMENT RMP LOCATION MAP

- SHOSHONE DISTRICT
- - - RESOURCE AREA BOUNDARIES
- ▨ MONUMENT PLANNING AREA



IDAHO KEY



## SUMMARY

The Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) is being prepared to provide the Bureau of Land Management, Shoshone District Office with a comprehensive framework for managing 1,178,989 acres of BLM-administered public land in the Monument Planning Area (see facing map) over the next 15 to 20 years. With increasing demands for various resources, prudent stewardship of the public lands simply can no longer be accomplished without comprehensive land use planning. This document includes a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) which addresses a BLM-proposed RMP, three RMP alternatives, and one sub-alternative. Each of the alternatives reflects key public land issues identified through public participation. The proposed Monument RMP reflects BLM's effort to resolve resource conflicts and ensure that the public lands are managed in accordance with principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

### Issues

The following issues were identified through public participation for the Monument Planning Area.

#### Lands - Retention or Disposal

1. Which lands should be made available for agricultural development?
2. Should lands with severe erosion hazards in the Lake Walcott area be developed for agriculture?
3. Which lands should be retained for livestock movement purposes between allotments?
4. Should isolated parcels of public lands in agricultural areas be retained for wildlife habitat values?
5. Which lands should be available for private and State exchanges?
6. What access should be provided to public lands?

*Summary*  
*Issues*

**Wilderness**

1. Which wilderness study areas should be recommended suitable for wilderness designation?

**Livestock Grazing**

1. What is the current carrying capacity of allotments for livestock grazing?
2. Which allotments will have intensive management through the development of allotment management plans or coordinated resource management plans?
3. Will conversions from sheep AUMs to cattle AUMs be allowed and what will be the rate of conversion?
4. What seasons of use for livestock grazing will be allowed?
5. Are there areas where there should be no livestock grazing?

**Range Improvements**

1. How much brush control and seeding will be completed?
2. What will be the constraints on brush control and seeding?
3. What other improvements are needed to improve livestock management?

**Fire Management**

1. How can the size and frequency of wildfires be reduced to lessen impacts on wildlife habitat, soil erosion, and livestock grazing?
2. How will prescribed fire be used?

### Soil Erosion

1. Will agricultural development cause accelerated wind erosion in the fragile soils in the Lake Walcott area?
2. Will resource uses cause accelerated erosion in the future on erosion-susceptible areas?

### Wildlife Habitat Management

1. Which public lands should be retained and managed for terrestrial wildlife habitat?
2. What actions will be taken to manage wildlife habitat?
3. What riparian areas should be protected?
4. How should habitat for sensitive, threatened and endangered, and candidate wildlife and plant species be managed?

### Minerals

1. Which areas should be retained to provide mineral materials (sand, gravel, cinders, and top soil) for private and local and State government use?
2. Which areas should be retained because of locatable mineral values?
3. Should there be restrictions on oil, gas, and geothermal activities?

### Lands for Local and State Government and Other Needs

1. Which lands should be made available for local government needs such as land fills, parks, and flood control?
2. Should the National Guard be allowed to use areas for military training?
3. Should other uses be allowed, such as hydro-power plants, roads, and power lines?

*Summary*  
*Issues*

Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs)

1. Should off-road vehicles be allowed to use the erosion-susceptible areas in the Lake Walcott area?
2. Should any areas be closed to ORV use?
3. Should specific ORV use areas be designated and/or developed?

Recreation

1. Should areas be designated for intensive recreation use?
2. What unique areas should be protected?

Cultural and Historic Values

1. Should areas be closed or restricted to other uses to protect cultural resources?

Alternatives

The four *RMP* alternatives addressed in this document each address the issues in a different way. *Following is a brief description of each alternative.*

Alternative A

The "No Action" alternative would continue present management direction. Most of the Monument Planning Area is not currently covered by an approved land use plan. Therefore, resource use levels for Alternative A were established by examining recent use levels and projected trends. Management direction for a portion of the southwest corner of the planning area would be provided by the existing Canyon Management Framework Plan (MFP). This MFP covers less than 3 percent of the BLM-administered public land in the planning area.

Resource use levels would generally remain the same as present levels in Alternative A. For example, livestock grazing levels would remain at present average actual use levels. No conversions from sheep use to cattle use would be allowed except where specifically addressed in an existing AMP. The number of Isolated Tracts managed for wildlife would stay at present levels.

Minor changes from the present could occur in Alternative A. Management actions required to implement an existing activity plan could be accomplished. New uses, such as communications sites, rights-of-way, and landfills could occur subject to environmental review.

#### Alternative B

This alternative would favor production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization. Management direction would favor higher livestock stocking levels, more range improvements, land disposal for agricultural development, and transfer of isolated or difficult to manage parcels out of Federal ownership. Restrictions on mining, mineral leasing, mineral material removal, and off-road vehicle use would be minimized.

#### Alternative C

This is the proposed Monument RMP. A variety of resource uses would be allowed. Production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization would occur, while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values, and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. A balanced approach to multiple use would be pursued. Resource use levels would be within the range set by Alternatives B and D.

#### Alternative D

In this alternative, protection of fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preservation of natural systems and cultural values, and nonconsumptive resource uses would be favored. Management direction would favor habitat management to increase wildlife populations, protection of cultural resources, protection of wilderness qualities, and opportunities for general dispersed recreation.



*Summary  
Alternatives*

**Sub-Alternative D**

Proposed resource uses in Sub-Alternative D would be the same as for Alternative D in all respects except there would be no livestock grazing. Therefore, no grazing preference would be proposed and no range improvements would be accomplished.

*Summary Table*

Table S-1 on the following pages shows a summary of the multiple use and transfer area acreages, resource use levels, and environmental effects for each alternative. The environmental effects shown are long-term effects that will occur by the end of 20 years. This is a summary table; the reader may need to refer to the text of the EIS for more details to answer questions.

TABLE S-1

## SUMMARY

Item	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Sub-Alternative D
<b>MULTIPLE USE AND TRANSFER AREAS</b>					
MODERATE USE (acres)	980,463	828,400	826,577	788,756 ✓	No change from D
LIMITED USE (acres)	195,068	270,295	297,992	385,819	No change from D
TRANSFER (acres)	3,458	80,294	54,420	4,414	No change from D
<b>SPECIFIC AREAS</b>					
Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)					
Recommended Suitable (number/acres) 1/	0/0	2/67,889 2/	2/87,902	6/154,015	No change from D
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) (number/acres)	0/0	2/233	3/673	4/683	No change from D
Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) (number/acres)	1/4,515	3/9,162	3/10,129	3/20,918	No change from D
Isolated Tracts for Upland Game Bird Management (number/acres)	87/10,563	21/3,700	92/10,885 3/	128/15,418 4/	No change from D
Areas of Geologic Interest (acres)	0	9,321	6,996	13,578	No change from D
<b>OTHER RESOURCE USE LEVELS</b>					
<b>LIVESTOCK GRAZING</b>					
Grazing Preference (AUMs)	97,562	149,997	142,879	59,111	0
Stocking Rate (acres per AUM)	9.3	5.6	6.0	15.3	N/A
Estimated Sheep to Cattle Conversion (AUMs)	4,982	22,860	21,910	8,529	0
<b>RANGE IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
Reseeding (acres)	0	55,500	25,500	0	0
Brush Control (acres)	13,000	19,000	19,000	13,000	0
Fence Construction (miles)	0	55	53	38	0
Water Pipeline Construction (miles)	0	100	74	50	0
Water Troughs (number)	0	124	110	83	0
Wells (number)	0	9	9	5	0
Cattleguards (number)	0	27	24	22	0
Road Construction (miles)	0	17	4	4	0
<b>FIRE MANAGEMENT</b>					
Road Maintenance for Access and Fuel Breaks (miles)	0	60	100	140	No change from D
Limited Suppression (acres)	1,178,989	1,004,056	997,903	976,489	No change from D
Full Suppression (acres)	0	174,933	181,086	202,500	No change from D
<b>SOIL EROSION</b>					
Restricted ORV use (acres)	804	2,585	2,585	2,939	No change from D
Limited Surface Disturbance in Fire Suppression (acres)	0	2,240	2,240	2,240	No change from D
Sand Dune Stabilization (acres)	150	150+	150+	150+	No change from D
<b>WILDLIFE HABITAT</b>					
Isolated Tracts (number)	87	21	92	128	No change from D
Pronghorn Winter Range Habitat Management Plan (HMP) (acres)	0	171,000	171,000	171,000	No change from D
Pronghorn Summer Range HMP (acres)	0	60,000	60,000	60,000	No change from D
Sage Grouse HMP (acres)	0	67,000	67,000	67,000	No change from D
<b>MINERALS</b>					
Mineral Material Removal Prohibited (acres)	0	0	1,264	1,264	No change from D
Closed to New Mining Claims (acres)	0	67,989	87,902	154,015	No change from D
Surface Occupancy Restricted (acres)	0	9,554	7,669	14,261	No change from D
Withdraw From Mineral Entry and Leasing (acres)	0	0	0	2,240	No change from D
<b>OFF-ROAD VEHICLES (ORVs)</b>					
Open (acres)	1,178,185	1,108,410	1,086,206	1,019,729	No change from D
Limited (acres)	354	2,240	2,680	3,034	No change from D
Closed (acres)	450	68,339	90,103	156,226	No change from D

TABLE S-1 (Cont.)

## SUMMARY

Item	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Sub-Alternative D
<b>RECREATION</b>					
SRMAs (number/acres)	1/4,515	3/9,162	3/10,129	3/20,918	No change from D
Vineyard Creek and Box Canyon Special Values Protected?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No change from D
Dry Cataracts Special Values Protected?	No	No	Yes	Yes	No change from D
Areas of Geologic Interest (acres)	0	9,321	6,996	13,578	No change from D
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>					
ORV Closure (acres)	450	345	345	345	No change from D
ORV Limitation (acres)	0	2,240	2,240	2,240	No change from D
Limited Surface Disturbance in Fire Suppression (acres)	0	2,585	2,585	2,585	No change from D
Cultural Resource Management Plans (number)	0	4	4	4	No change from D
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS</b>					
<b>FIRE MANAGEMENT</b>					
Number of Fires Annually (percent change)	0	- 1	0	0	+ 50
Acres Burned Annually (percent change)	0	- 5	0	+ 6 to + 7	+ 100
<b>WILDLIFE</b>					
Bliss Rapids Snail Habitat Protection Emphasis	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ferruginous Hawk	Population Increase	Population Increase	Population Increase	Population Increase	Substantial Population Increase
Swainson's Hawk	Population Increase	Population Increase	Population Increase	Population Increase	Population Increase
Burrowing Owls (percent change)	+ 10	- 4	+ 6	+ 15	+ 15
Shoshone Sculpin Habitat Protection Emphasis	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pheasants and Gray Partridge (percent change)	+ 10	0	+ 13	+ 34	+ 31
Sage Grouse (percent change)	0	+ 1.5	+ 1	+ 10	- 20
Pronghorn (percent change)	+ 4	- 9	- 2	+ 39	+ 22
Mule Deer (percent change)	+ 4	- 11	- 1	+ 31	0
Hybrid Trout Habitat Protection Emphasis	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-Game Birds (percent change)	+ 2	- 7	- 3	+ 8	- 3
<b>GRAZING MANAGEMENT</b>					
AUMs Lost to Land Transfers	330	13,168	9,432	157	No Grazing
Number of Allotments/Permittees Significantly Affected by Land Transfers	4/4	44/74	34/56	0/0	No Grazing
Number of Allotments Entirely Transferred	4	29	21	0	No Grazing
AUMs Lost Annually to Wildfire With no Opportunity to Shift Use to Other Areas	0	5,768	5,667	0	No Grazing
<b>VEGETATION</b>					
<b>Trend</b>					
Downward (percent)	5	4	4	1	1
Stable (percent)	74	77	76	75	75
Upward (percent)	21	19	20	24	24
<b>Condition</b>					
Poor (percent)	70	63	68	69	64
Fair (percent)	8	8	8	8	13
Good (percent)	2	2	2	3	3
Seeded (percent)	20	27	22	20	20
Substation Tract Protected?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Silver Sage Playa Protected?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

TABLE S-1 (Cont.)

## SUMMARY

Item	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Sub-Alternative D
<b>LANDS</b>					
Lands Available for Transfer (acres)	3,458	80,294	54,420	4,414	4,414
Ag. Entry Applications Available for Transfer (acres)	0	43,510	26,570	3,109	3,109
Ag. Entry Applications Not Available for Transfer (acres)	43,990	480	17,420	40,881	40,881
<b>WILDERNESS</b>					
Recommended Suitable, Wilderness Values Protected (acres)	0	67,889	87,902	154,015	154,015
Recommended Non-Suitable, Wilderness Values Not Protected (acres)	154,015	86,126	66,113	0	0
<b>NATURAL HISTORY</b>					
Areas of Geologic Interest Protected (acres)	0	10,254	10,254	16,836	16,836
Areas of Geologic Interest Not Protected (acres)	16,836	6,582	6,582	0	0
Dry Cataracts Protected?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Box Canyon Protected?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>					
High Density Occurrence Areas Protected From ORV Disturbance (acres)	795	7,790	7,790	12,549	12,549
High Density Occurrence Areas Protected From Surface Disturbance in Fire Suppression	0	7,685	7,685	12,329	12,329
<b>RECREATION</b>					
Mule Deer Hunting (percent change)	+ 300	+ 299	+ 291	+ 263	+ 263
Pheasant Hunting (percent change)	+ 88	+ 64	+ 84	+ 96	+ 96
Gray Partridge Hunting (percent change)	+ 100	+ 84	+ 96	+ 104	+ 104
Nature Study (percent change)	+ 40	+ 46	+ 48	+ 56	+ 56
Cold Water Fishing (percent change)	+ 60	+ 63	+ 63	+ 63	+ 63
ORV Use (percent change)	+ 100	+ 107	+ 99	+ 68	+ 68
Float Boating (percent change)	+ 400	+ 347	+ 400	+ 400	+ 400
Dispersed Recreation (percent change)	+ 120	+ 123	+ 125	+ 136	+ 136
<b>SOILS</b>					
Soil Erosion Rate (tons/acre/year)	4.8	5.4	5.2	4.1	4.6
Severe Erosion Areas (acres)	36,509	38,936	39,248	33,469	43,555
Reduced Soil Productivity (acres)	519	19,712	11,846	837	837
<b>MINERALS</b>					
Mineral Material Removal Prohibited (acres)	0	0	1,264	1,264	1,264
Closed to New Mining Claims (acres)	0	67,889	87,902	154,015	154,015
Surface Occupancy Restricted (acres)	0	9,554	7,669	14,261	14,261
Withdrawn From Mineral Entry and Leasing (acres)	0	0	0	2,240	2,240
Existing and Potential Material Sites Transferred (acres)	2,900	4,163	3,163	220	220
<b>ECONOMIC CONDITIONS</b>					
Total Annual Income Change (dollars)	+2,000,000	+7,900,000	+6,000,000	+1,200,000	+600,000
Total Employment Change (number of jobs)	+ 202	+ 676	+ 506	+ 173	+ 136
Annual Costs (dollars)	306,180	476,600	429,815	408,905	475,160

1/ Does not include 179,990 acres of the Great Rift WSA recommended suitable in a previous study.

2/ Portions of two WSAs.

3/ Includes 395 acres within the Snake River Rim SRMA.

4/ Includes 534 acres within the Snake River Rim SRMA.